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Parents blast proposed plan

By FRANCES ABBITT

The outline of a proposed attendance policy for the Appomattox County Schools brought negative responses and questions from a number of concerned parents at last Wednesday's meeting of the Appomattox County School Board.

The policy, if adopted, would become effective at the beginning of the 1984-85 school year.

With the proposed change, students would no longer be required to bring notes explaining absences; instead the school would notify parents when their child had missed six days. After 12 absences, a student would automatically be failed. Children who are sick over a long period of time and receiving tutoring under the home study program would be exempt.

Lloyd Walton, superintendent, said he had received several calls and letters on the proposed policy.

"The board is still discussing the proposed changes and we would appreciate comments from parents and school personnel," Walton commented. "A student's attendance will be based on class period attendance rather than daily attendance as in the past."

A copy of the proposed policy had been sent to all school personnel according to Walton and he said, "There has been no negative response from them."

"I want the right to write an excuse for my child," commented one parent present. "I want to explain exactly why my child was absent from school."

Mrs. Patty Myrick, parent and substitute teacher for the school system, called the proposed attendance policy "grade tampering."

"I believe a child's earned grades should not be cut because of an attendance problem but the problem of absenteeism should be handled in some other way," Myrick said. Several parents agreed.

"I happen to think there is more to education than grades," commented Dr. A.A. Fratrick, board member.

"Several schools in the state adopted the policy," commented J.B. Drinkard, board member, and added, "my wife opposes the proposed policy because without having to write absence notes, she would not know when her child was missing from school."

Objection to the proposed policy taking away the parents' right to send an absence note to school was the consensus of those parents present.

"What we need is more parents participation," Drinkard said.

It was pointed out by several teachers that a students grades and attendance cannot be separated.

"A meeting is planned for later this month with teachers, parents, gudidance counselors and board members to review the proposed policy and refine what is presently standard procedure in handling asbenteeism," said Walton.

"I am happy to point out that student test scores are higher," said Walton. "Much higher than last year."

Appomattox County High School summer session will get underway June 11 and continue through July 23. Course offerings will be English 9, 10, 11 and 12; U.S. History; U.S. Government and possibly some other subjects if sufficient interest is noted.

Tuition will be $35 per repeat subject (two maximum); $60 per new subject (one maximum) and a $4.00 textbook rental fee per subject.

JUST LIKE DAD, Brett Stratton, 11, left, and Jeff, 9, right, the sons of Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Stratton got into the construction business this past winter. With just a little help from their father and Mr. Burrell, they constructed this high rise tree house. The boys are looking forward to their first overnight outing in the tree house sometime in the near future. The tree house is also home for a family of birds nesting in the hollow tree. Note, if you will, the ladder hinged, "just to keep out enemies," so they boys say.....older sisters, maybe? (Photo by Allen Austin)

For future improvements

Town buys lot next to lagoon

The Town of Appomattox has purchased property adjoining the sewer lagoon and the Appomattox Ball Park from Mrs. Verta Stanley, according to an announcement at the May meeting of Appomattox Town Council Monday night.

Council has no definite plans for use of the land at present but in the future if improvements to the sewer plant or ball park or additions are needed the land is available.

Plans call for work to begin on the updating of existing Waterwaste Treatment Plant in late fall, according to Town Manager W.R.Britton, Jr.

"I'll begin working on acquiring the necessary rights of way as soon as possible," Britton said.

In reporting on the second well site on Courtland property, Britton said, "We came up with another dry well. We are working with the health department, asking that they come down and look at the proposed well sites."

"Several sites north of town will be good I believe," added Britton. "I plan to have the state geologist check them out." There will be no cost to the town for the geologist's evaluation.

Council members reviewed the options available for the five additional channels to be added to existing cable television, and could not come up with a satisfactory choice. It was the consensus that council should continue negotiating as to the five channels for the additional tier.

"We do have pretty good cable service," commented Dick Bass, council member.

In other business a motion was made to advertise the proposed Flood Prone Area Ordinance. Under the terms of this ordinance, permission to build a home or business would have to meet guidelines set by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. However, improvements may be made on existing buildings.

The cost for improvements on the Appomattox Town Ball Park ran higher than anticipated but, according to Ronald Spiggle, Appomattox mayor, it "was well worth it."

"If all of you council members have not seen the park since the work has been done, by all means make a point of getting down there. It is really looking good,"Spiggle said.

Supervisors eye lower tax rate

The Appomattox County Board of Supervisors Thursday proposed lowering the tax rate in the $6 million proposed 1984-85 budget from 60 cents per $100 of assessed value to 56 cents, but property owners would still pay more in tax dollars.

Because of the recent reassessment in the county which raised property values approximately 30 percent, real estate taxes would increase.

A public hearing on the budget is slated for later this month. The county's proposed 1984-85 budget is a 10 percent increase over this year's budget of approximately $7.9 million.

About 72 percent of the county budget is made up by the $6 million school budget which includes a six percent raise for teachers. The school budget includes funds to pay five percent of teachers contributions to the Virginia Supplemental Retirement System. As present, teachers pay for all of their retirement plan. The school board has budgeted money to pay $158 per year for each employee's hospitalization insurance.

The board of supervisors sliced $110,000 from the school system's request but the school board, as yet, doesn't know where the cut will come.

The Sheriff Department proposed budget of more than $374,000, an increase of 22.5 over the current budget of $305,000 is included in the county budget. The sheriff's budget includes funds for a new radio sustem.

General Electric and Motorola presented bids on radio equipment for the department, including a new base station, car radios and portable radios.

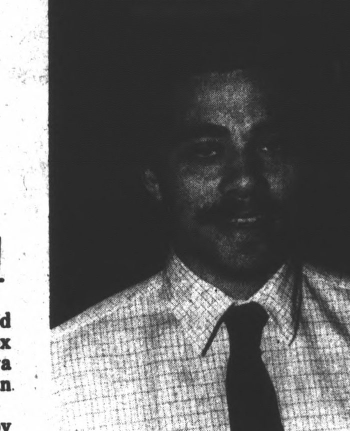
The new system will replace the present system which is getting outdated, and will mean better communication between counties, police cars, etc. At present deputies lose radio contact once outside a five-mile radius of Appomattox.

Dog confinement underway

Appomattox County's annual dog confinement period went into effect yesterday (May 15) and continues until June 15.

During this period, all dogs in the county must be confined on their owner's property.

Martin named to head FmHA



Terry L. Martin

Terry L. Martin has been appointed County Supervisor for the Appomattox FmHA Office. He replaces Miss Ava Marshall who was transferred to an FmHA Office in Ohio in January 1984.

The local appointment was made by Roie Godsey, state director of Farmers Home Administration, headquartered in Richmond, Virginia.

Mr. Martin is a 1980 graduate of Virginia Tech with a B.S. Degree in Agricultural Economics. His former home is Maurertown, Virginia. He has been with FmHA over 10 months working at the Wytheville County Office.

The Farmers Home Administration is a rural credit agency of the USDA.

The Appomattox Office serves the citizens of Appomattox County. The office makes individual loans to farmers and rural residents for homes and farms. The office has information about all programs.

At home, on farm

Safety is focus

Thursday, May 17 will be Farm and Home Safety Day in Appomattox County. The activities of this special day will conducted by the Virginia Copperative Extension Service in cooperation with the Extension Homemakers, Southern States Farm and Home Advisory Committe and Farm Bureau Women's Committee.

Dr. Glen Hetzel, extension safety specialist, will be presenting the program. The afternoon program will begin at 1:30 p.m. and a repeat session will be held at 8 p.m. Refreshments, handouts, and door prizes will be a part of the program. All of this will be taking place in the District Extension Office Auditorium located next door to the Appomattox Post Office.

During these sessions attention will be focused on the following areas: Clean up for safety (farm chemicals, old machinery, tools, etc.); lawn mowers, moving farm machinery, equipment, power tools used on the farm and in the home yard for summer work; the importance of filling abandoned wells; how to react, what to do, etc. if there's a farm or yard accident; what to teach children regarding getting help when there is an emergency or accident; electrical shocks in the home; summer storm safety; bathroom and kitchen safety; safety on stairways and porches; protective clothing when using chemicals.

Included in the program planned for Thursday will the awarding of prizes for the Farm and Home Safety poster contest. The contest was open to 3,4,5, and 6 graders. The theme of Farm and Home Safety could be used in what ever way the student chose to use. The twelve winners will receive their awards at the 1:30 program on Thursday.

Fingerprinting clinic slated

A free fingerprinting clinic will be held at Appomattox County High School Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. for children in Appomattox County age two or older.

The fingerprinting program, which is sponsored by the Appomattox Junior Woman's Club in cooperation with the Appomattox Sheriff's Department, is strictly voluntary, and a child must have written permission of a parent or guardian in order to be printed.

The prints, which are useful in identifying lost children, will be given to the parents to keep in a safe deposit box or other secure place. The Sheriff's Department will keep the parental-permission slips on file.

Children must be accompanied by a parent or guardian in order to be fingerprinted at the high school Saturday.

Father Darkleaf

By CALVIN ROBINSON

Greetings. A bit cool as another week gets under way. From all I see and hear, planting is a bit late. Those blessed with a "green thumb" will do alright. I am not in that class, but my friend, Joe, helps me and maybe we will have something to show for our efforts.

I brought a sprig of dogwood to display in a living room vase. Next morning it was limp and had to be tossed out. Then I brought in another sprig and this time dropped an aspirin tablet into the container. Yowsah, the plant is still living and looks fresh.

All around town see some lovely Iris in bloom. In another week the few I have will be a-blooming.

From my friend in California this week's postcard was unique. A comic one. Showed two deer in a happy mood. Were driving a snappy sports automobile and had two hunters strapped to the fenders. Thanks, Walter.

And congratulations to Freddie Lawson. He won the championship as top tennis player in the Seminole League. Son of Mr. and Mrs. Fred H. Lawson, Appomattox.

Do not forget the Memorial Day program at the local court house square, 2 p.m. Sunday, May 27. Our Congressman, Hon. Dan Daniel is listed as speaker and the high school band will entertain.

Noted with approval several paint jobs around town. Homes and business. And just think of all the new high school and college diplomas issued to recent grads. My high school diploma, some 16 x 20 inches, is framed and hangs on the wall of my den. College diploma on opposite side. Suggestion: Have your diploma framed.

Had a nice visit from Mr. and Mrs. W.C. Dudley, Pamplin. Had been attending an educational conference at Chincoteague, on Virginia's famed Eastern Shore and brought me several newspapers and highlights of their trip. One publication was all about the making of decoys. Wooden ducks. Big business that away.

Wrap-up. Holiday Lake has been open lately on week-ends, but opens full time for the season May 26.

Selecting plants draws people to Appomattox. Had a chat on "plant row" at a local store with Mr. and Mrs. Edward Bryant, of Route 727.

And Monday morning the car in front of me on Confederate Blvd. bore an out-of-state license. Headed West. As neared the turn-off to visit the famed McLean House and our National Park, I crossed my fingers hoping they would turn and visit our Shrine of Peace. Worked. They turned. Appomattox is a Growing Town and County and still invites and has room for visitors. Thanks for reading and see ya around.

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Lawson wins again

By BILL SHERROD

In Seminole District tennis, Freddy Lawson is the name Appomattox opponents fear most.

To say that Lawson has dominated the district in recent years is true enough, but it suggests understatement.

Lawson has not only dominated the district, he has been invincible. In three years of district play, he has not lost a match: his district record since his sophomore year has been 40-0.

Indeed, the only two losses of his career in the Seminole District came when he was a freshman, and those were at the hands of seniors.

Lawson, a senior, capped his Seminole District career last week with easy victories over Chris Howard and David Copeland. As district champion he will face an as yet undetermined opponent in the Region III tournament Saturday at Martinsville.

Looking at Lawson, one gets the idea that, at least in the early days of his Seminole District play, some of his opponents might have underestimated his ability. At five feet, five inches, he doesn't have the stature many consider requisite for atheletic prowess. But, to repeat an overused cliche, looks are deceiving.

"Freddy's like a backboard," notes Doug Marshall, Lawson's tennis coach at Appomattox County High School. "If you hit the ball to his side of the net, he's going to hit it back at you, and if you can't get up to the net in a hurry, he's going to beat you. Freddy wears his opponents down. He lets them beat themselves. He's tough."

And Lawson enjoys his frequent David-and-Goliath-style enc ou n t e rs. When asked if he derives a special pleasure from drubbing an opponent of, say six-feet-two or six-feet-three, he answers, simply, "Yes."

In addition to his quickness and tenacity on the court, Lawson has used hard work and a love of the sport to achieve his success in the Seminole District

He has been playing tennis since he was five years old, and he plans to continue playing next year as a freshman at Lynchburg College.

When asked what he considers the strengths and weaknesses of his game, Lawson says he considers his ground stroke his strong point, and his forehand shot his weakness.

"I hit with two hands on both my backhand and forehand shots," he says. "That tends to reduce my reach some."

Asked if he has considered carrying his tennis prowess beyond the college level, Lawson says "I've thought about it, but a lot depends on what happens in the next couple of years. If nothing else, I'd like to be certified so I could give tennis lessons."

While Lawson prospects as a professional player aren't clear now, one thing is: it will be some time before the Seminole District will see the likes of a Freddy Lawson again.

"That record (40-0 in district) is going to be hard to beat," Marshall notes. "We're going to miss Freddy Lawson at the high school next season."

Freddy Lawson

MAY